

rapidly acquired speech, and his IQ score rose. At eight he entered a school for the blind, and at sixteen the Royal Normal College for the Blind. At eighteen he was a well-poised young man with considerable charm and good looks, and wide interests. The remarkable change in mental and emotional development was due to skilled teaching, warm interest and affection.

HILDA LEWIS

Aspects of Family Mental Health in Europe. By various authors. Public Health Papers, No. 28. Geneva, 1965. WHO. Pp. 124. Price 8s. 6d.

THIS BOOK, CONTAINING papers written by psychiatrists, therapists and other workers from a number of European countries, is evidence of the current widespread interest in the family.

The first paper is a stimulating account by Dr. H. Hoffmeyer of the work done for the mother and the family particularly in Scandinavian countries, through family protection schemes, and specifically in Denmark through the famous "Mothers' Aid Centres". These centres provide legal, social, medical and psychiatric services for unmarried as well as married women. They have a duty to interview and help women seeking abortion: to provide contraceptive advice, to supervise adoptions, to support with financial and other aid overburdened mothers, and to help resolve family discord. There is much in these schemes which is relevant to the revision of our own abortion laws and the Seebohm Committee's inquiry into better ways of integrating our local authority and personal social services.

Among the papers dealing with practical social welfare, there is an interesting account by a psychiatrist of the slowly changing situation in the employment of women in Spain—a country particularly late in making use of this reservoir of labour and talent. Various supportive schemes and centres to protect the family from breakdown have already been found necessary, although at the same time the cultural value of widening the women's horizons has been recognized.

Monsieur A. Isambert describes the development of the well-known "Schools for Parents" which have been successfully developed in France since the last war, having been founded in 1929 as part of a scheme to overcome the indifference of parents to their children's sexual and emotional problems. The school in Paris at first concentrated on teaching parents about child development, based on psychoanalytic principles, but was later drawn into much broader fields of educational psychology and sociology. It also provides personal psychological help for the parents themselves, marriage guidance, and advice for young people. M. Isambert enumerates similar organizations in other European countries, but comments on the relatively slight interest shown in Britain.

Among other papers dealing with the role of individual and group psychotherapy in clearing up family upsets, an account by Drs. Jirina Knoblochova and Ferdinand Knobloch of the methods practised at the Psychiatric Department of the University Polyclinic, Prague, shows how far such efforts have advanced in Central Europe.

The British contributions include an account of the Family Discussion Bureau at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, and of the Child Therapy Clinic at Hampstead, described by Mrs. L. Pincus and Dr. Joseph Sandler respectively.

HILDA LEWIS

ABORTION

Abortion: An Ethical Discussion. London, 1965. Church Information Office. Pp. 70. Price 4s. 6d.

THIS REPORT IS the work of a committee set up by the Board for Social Responsibility of the Church Assembly of the Church of England, under the chairmanship of Canon I. T. Ramsey, Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion at Oxford, the secretary being the Reverend G. R. Dunstan. It is lucid, impartial, and thorough, and presents a cogent argument for a limited reform of the present law, while stopping short of the proposals made by Lord Silkin in the Bill which has recently been before the House of Lords.